

In regards to the June 2 vote on the Broadcast Ownership Docket, the facts have been hidden by the chairman with this synthetic June 2 deadline. The burden of proof as to the effects that further deregulation will have must rely on the proponents of this rule change. While we have had in the past the greatest broadcasting system in the world, further consolidation of media ownership means reduction of local news, reduction of diversity in programming, and reduction in the number of viewpoints presented on the air waves. This has become a grassroots issue and should not be decided before real studies have been done to prove that the consequences of these rule changes are insignificant. Children Now has performed a study comparing children's programming from the late 90's before the duopolies were allowed by the FCC and in 2002. Children's programming was cut in half, both the number of children's series and the number of hours. Furthermore, the number of shows broadcast on more than one station quadrupled. Children's programming is not the only area that will suffer. If media companies are allowed to own the dominant television station as well as the dominant newspaper, in addition to many radio stations in the same market, the new style of broadcasters to take sides on issues will greatly slant information concerning public elections and voting issues. The deregulation of the radio industry should serve as the "canary in the mine" for the further deregulation. Radio has become cold, much more highly syndicated, and generally even more slanted in its news coverage. The reason for this is quite simple, fewer owners wish to control their media organizations to promote their own viewpoints. While this is certainly not illegal, it is against the best interests of the public. In an ideal world, media should provide information to the consumer in an unbiased way. The absence of an entire perspective on a given issue cuts to the very heart of our democracy. No longer will people have all the information necessary to decide how to vote. In that case we should simply rely on electors to do the voting for us, as they did in the early stages of our democracy. Local issues are important to me and my family. With further consolidation, pressures on the bottom line promote national coverage to the detriment of local coverage. This is a grave decision that need not be made. PLEASE, do not vote to accept these rules on June 2.